

THE IMPACTS OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS ON EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

MURANA, Asimiyu Olalekan

Lecturer, Department of Political Science and Conflict Resolution, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

Salahu Moshood Olayinka

Lecturer, Department of Politics and Good Governance, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

Ibrahim Basirat Omotayo

Lecturer, Department of History and International Relations, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examines the Nigerian Civil Service Reforms with a view to knowing its impacts on effective service delivery. The paper which employs secondary source of collecting data and structural-functionalism as its framework of analysis reveals that the civil service remains a central vehicle for achieving government objectives in any nation of the world. This informs the government decision to embark on various reforms of the civil service. However, as revealed in this study, these reforms have failed to reposition the Nigerian Civil Service for effective service delivery. Today, the Nigerian state and people are still faced with the problem of development. Therefore, to arrest the current situation of the Nigerian Civil Service, the paper recommended that government should embark on pragmatic reforms rather than the usual cosmetic approaches by ensuring adequate pay package and other economic incentives avoiding unnecessary duplication of ministries, departments and agencies of government promoting sound policies on recruitment, training and retraining of civil servants. Recruitment and promotion on the job should be strictly based on meritocracy, performance and achievement.

Key words: Civil Service, Reform, Government, Service delivery and Nigerian

1.0 Introduction

The Nigerian Civil Service derived its origin from colonial administration. It has remained central as a vehicle for achieving government objectives for service delivery and development for global relevance. This role, it played from its original conception as a collaborative instrument for exploitation for the imperialist administration through the various administrations and regime types of civil and military rule in Nigeria. At various time therefore, the civil service has undergone structural and attitudinal reforms to cope with visions, aspirations, and goals of successive administration. The reforms have been more compelling by the frequent changes in administration alternating between civilian and the military with their attendant implications on expectations and the demand on the service (Iyayi, 2010 p.247).

Thus, the attainment of good governance in any society depends on the effective and efficient provision of services for its citizens. Such service delivery is better performed by an arm of executive called civil service. Civil service is the administrative bureaucracy of any country that is saddled with the responsibility of implementing and enforcing the policies and programmes of government. It therefore means that for policy objectives of the state to be achieved, the civil service must be alive to its responsibilities (Solomon, 2015 p. 104). Ayodele (2004) observed that the challenges of development and stability of the polity depends greatly on the efficient, effective, mobile, and accountable public service system.

Therefore, one need to understand that, civil service is a key instrument to the survival of any governmental setting and indeed national development. In a general sense, the civil service provides the semblance of government. Thus, the effectiveness and productivity of any government is largely determined by the efficiency of the civil service. As the administrative and technical support to the governing apparatus, the civil service remains the only viable mechanism for policy initiation or formulation, policy advice and policy implementation. This probably explains why Q'connel (1981, p.164) aptly posited that "political leadership without administrative and technical support is power in a vacuum; and administration without political

leadership is only tidiness in stagnation". It simply means that the civil service is a sine-qua-non in any political system because it constitutes' the engine of development.

At independence in 1960 when Nigerian nationals took over the administrative leadership, no attempt was made by them to restructure the Civil Service to suit our own developmental needs. The Nigeria bureaucrats who occupied the leadership position in the Civil Service imbibed the colonial mentality of wealth acquisition for self-aggrandizement and self- superiority. Instead of working to improve the lot of the country, they became colonial masters in a, "black man's skin". The higher civil servants assumed great political powers without responsibility to the people. They exhibited selfishness and sectional interests within the system which consequently impaired discipline and achievement of goals. The individuals were pre-occupied with feathering their own nests in total neglect of their individual and collective roles toward satisfying societal needs. This aggravated the abysmal performance of the Civil Service and consequently the under development of the country. These and other factors necessitated the various reforms to repositioning the civil service for effective service delivery and national development.

It is against this back drop that this paper seeks to examine these reforms and their impacts on service delivery. In doing this the paper is divided into ten sections. Following this introduction is statement of the problem, the third section is objectives of the study, the fourth section is conceptual clarification, the fifth section is theoretical frame work, the sixth section is evolution of civil service, the seventh section is the civil service reform, the eight section is the civil service problems in Nigeria, the ninth section is the impacts of the reforms on effective service delivery, and the tenth section is conclusion and recommendations.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

At Independence in 1960, when Nigerians took over the leadership of the country, the civil service structure was left the way the colonial master kept it. Much was not changed in the activities and roles of the civil service.

The Nigerians in service replaced the colonial masters and adopted their style of management for self-aggrandizement and exploitation of the masses. This was between the periods of 1960 and 1966, consequently, Nigerians clamoured for Nigerianization policy. The introduction of the Nigerianization policy in the civil service was meant to reduce and ultimately end the expatriate predominance in the higher civil service in Nigeria but it rather brought with it the problem of the regionalization of the Nigerian civil service, where Nigerians of Northern extract adopted the Northernization policy in which northerners were given priority attention in the area of recruitment in the service whether they were qualified or not. The same thing went for the Eastern and Western regions of the country. This led to segregation and sectionalism in the Nigerian civil service.

In the same vein, the military also disbanded the legislative and elected representatives of the people. Thus, the government function without elected representatives, yet policies were made and implemented and laws were enacted and enforced. This brought the question of, who determined policies and enacted laws in Nigeria during this period? The military co-opted former politicians, academics and top civil servants to ministerial posts thereby giving them enormous powers to initiate economic, social, and political policies and at the same time executed them. This led to the lack of accountability and probity in the service. During this time, grand corruption was pervasive among the civil servants and others who had access to political power. Okigbo reported that between 1988 and June 1994, the sum of \$12.5 billion government revenue in extra ordinary 'Special Accounts' were unaccounted for and this loot has continued up till today.

Therefore, the present state of affairs in the civil service appears that the variables responsible for poor performance in the Nigerian civil service have not been dealt with and so the problem still lingers. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine some of the past Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria.

3.0 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of the Nigerian Civil Service Reforms on effective service delivery. While the specific objectives include:

- ✓ To examine the reasons for these reforms
- ✓ To know the contents of these reforms
- ✓ To find out whether these reforms improve service delivery, and if not, to identify the problems/challenges
- ✓ To make suggestions on how to make the reform more effective to promote better service delivery

4.0 Conceptual Overview

The civil service is one of the great political inventions of the nineteenth century in England. The first generation of civil servants was called ‘court servants’ or court clerks. Before the era of court clerks, the work of government was done by persons of the royal household (Olaopa, 2009 p. 31 cited in Adekola and Yahaya, 2013 p. 481). Therefore, Civil service could be conceived as: the management of public programmes; the translation of politics into reality that is of benefit to the people; the study of government decisions making; and analysis of the policies.

According to Adamolekun (2002), Civil service is commonly used as the synonym of the government machinery; this is so in Britain and most commonwealth countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. In British, civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the decision makers. According to the 1999 constitution, section 318 (1) civil service refers to service of the federation (state) in a civil capacity, staff of the office of the President, (Governor), the Vice President, (Deputy Governor), a ministry or department of the federation (state), assigned with the responsibility for any business of the government of the federation (state), (FRN,1999). In the view of Anazodo *et al.* (2012), civil service in Nigeria comprises workers in the various ministries or departments apart from those who hold political appointments. Ipinlaiye (2001) defined civil service as the body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and non political career by the Federal and state Governments primarily to render and faithfully give effect to their decisions and implementation.

Civil service reform on the other hand refers to changes introduced into the structure of the service as an institution and orientation of its personnel to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency. The service, just like any other organization, experiences occasional low performance arising from factors of overgrown size, poor attitude to work, low accountability, absence of transparency and consequent wastages, dearth of knowledge and skills demanded by new technologies. To combat the debilitating effects of these on the civil service, reforms are undertaken from time to time. It is believed that the service has some deficiencies which must be rectified to make it effective (Iyayi, 2003 cited in Iyayi, 2010 p. 248). To Seidman, (1970) civil service reform is to purify bureaucratic blood and prevent stagnation. According to Jose, (1976 cited in Iyayi, 2010) civil service or administrative reform is “a deliberate attempt to use power, authority and influence to change goals, structure or procedure of the bureaucracy and therefore, alter the behavior of its personnel”. The various organs and agencies that are concerned with operational activities of the service must be sharp and potent for effectiveness. Slack in any aspect or whole of the institution brings failure in policy formulation. Civil service reforms thus, help to introduce necessary changes into the system for both policy articulation and implementation. Reforms in this instance, is for ensuring the effectiveness and the capacity of policy formulation as well as the implementations of policies.

Thus, civil service reform has been defined by several authors, central to these definitions however, is that it is to infuse into government machinery, better ways for doing government business. For this, some authors have stressed innovation and comprehensiveness of the exercise. Along this line, Hahn-Been Lee (1970) defined it as “a generic process permeating all phases of administration; it is conceived as the crucial capacity that is required for the introduction of creativity into administrative units at whatever level for conscious pursuit of development goals.” The United Nation (1971) defined it as specially designed effort to introduce fundamental changes in the public administration system via reforms or at least through measures for improvement of one or more of its key elements such as administrative structure, personnel and processes”.

5.0 Theoretical Framework

This study was carried out within the theoretical framework of structural- functionalism. This theory is an offshoot of general systems theory and was popularized by Radcliff-Brown and Gabriel Almond (Olaniyi, 1997; Enemu, 1999). These scholars maintain that structural-functionalism is a methodology of analysis which examines a system in terms of the structures of which the system is composed, and the functions performed by those structures.

According to the proponents of this theory structural-functionalism can be described as means of explaining basic functions of the political structures in the political system and it is a tool of investigation. In essence, it explains the relationships between the parts (structures) on one hand and between the parts and the whole (political system) on the other hands. The relationship is explained in terms of the functions of each. It is the contributions of each structure that help to sustain the system.

The structures are many and they can take any form. They include political parties, interest groups, business groups, religious groups, the bureaucracy or civil service, legislature, executive, judiciary, among other. For instance, the civil service or bureaucracy as a structure within the political system performs many functions including policy formulation, policy advice, policy implementation and such other functions geared towards national development. It looks as if though these functions are the monopoly of the civil service. However, it must be emphasized that other governmental structures like the legislature, judiciary, political parties etc. concurrently help in carrying out some of these functions to sustain the political system.

Elegant as this theory seems, it has been criticized for its over reliance on issues of stability and equilibrium or system maintenance. It looks at the society as a stable entity with everybody living together harmoniously, and with each structure performing it requisite function.

However, this contradicts the underlying principle of political studies which is premised on power relationships, producing more often than not conflict and instability. In essence, functionalism in a way is anti-Marxism which believes strongly in the existence of contradictions

and change in society. The criticism notwithstanding, structural functionalism best explains the civil service in Nigeria.

6.0 Evolution of Civil Service in Nigeria

The civil service in Nigeria dated as far back as 18th century when the administrative organization that was set up by the Royal Niger Company was later handed over to the British administration. The colonial administrative machinery was narrowly focused to handle the state function which was basically the maintenance of law and order. The strategy for carrying out that function was essentially through an arrangement which not only excluded the colonized personnel but also facilitated the exploitation of the colonies. The colonial government established a civil service with a limited objective of ensuring peaceful administration of the colonized people. At that time the service was principally dominated by colonial officials as Nigerians were deliberately excluded in the service, especially the senior cadre. For example, by 1948 only 172 (representing 7%) of the 2,297 senior civil servants were Nigerians; the proportion hiked to only 19% at independence (Nicolson, 1966 cited in Solomon, 2015 p. 106).

The colonial civil servants were said to be men and women of high sense of mission, dedication, discipline and motivation who were prepared to make sacrifices. Their course was to achieve the goals of imperial policy and they did what they were expected to do with the highest sense of dedication, enterprise, initiative and even risk." From the 1940s, however, the colonial administration started to admit Nigerians into selected senior positions in the service following some reforms of the local government (Native Authorities) as a means of mobilizing the native human and material resources for limited socioeconomic and political development, especially for the first ever colonial development and welfare plan. This period coincided with the nationalist's agitation of Nigerianisation of the senior civil service despite the imperialist propaganda that Africans were not ripe to be entrusted with senior positions and responsibilities. (Nicolson, 1966 cited in Beetsch, 2010 p. 107).

From that time the civil service witnessed phenomenal growth in number and service institutions, training and competence levels. There was also a shift in the role of the service from the control

of decision making process to advising on policy matters and implementation of policy decisions until independence was achieved in 1960. In a similar vein, the period coincided with the time the unity of the service as a colonial institution was broken into Federal and Regional Civil Services in the wake of the adoption of the Macpherson Constitution and the quest for the adoption of a "true Federation" in 1954. The federal and regional (and later the state) governments were to maintain sovereign civil services loyal and answerable to no other authority than the regional or state authorities. In this respect the regional/state civil servants considered themselves equal in role notwithstanding the needs for national integration.

In spite of the break-up, the civil service of that period continued to remain the primary source of advice and policy ' implementation. And in terms of structure and role the service remained the same under the civilian administration of the First Republic. However, the specter of corruption among the politicians which accelerated from 1962 also found its way into the civil service and became a matter of concern when the military took over political leadership in 1966.

With the coming of the military there was the suspension of all democratic institutions, ban on political party activities and party bureaucracies. Secondly, during the early period of military rule, politicians were kept away from government with permanent secretaries taking over the mandate of decision-making in addition to their primary role of advice and implementation. The period also witnessed the dilemma of the civil war-whether Nigeria was to remain united or not. With the east poised for secession, the military and the civil service had cause to defend the unity of the country throughout the period of the war. Although civilian commissioners were appointed in June, 1967, some of them felt their position anomalous; they looked forward to the earliest end of the civil war and an end to military rule. Since the role of the civil servants was to "patriotically serve the government-of-the-day to the best of their abilities, the situation led to mutual distrust between the military and the politicians in government. As a result the military rulers found convenient ally in the civil service. The top civil servants continued to maintain highly political positions which turned them political masters rather than civil servants (Tagowa, 1999; Balewa, 1999; Beetseh, 2010).

7.0 The Civil Service Problems in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the civil service which constitutes the hub through which the government implements its policies and programmes is bedeviled with a lot of problems which has over the years constituted a significant drag on the overall growth and development of the Nigerian state. These problems range from over bloated workforce as a result of political patronage that made many unqualified personnel to join the civil service and other sorts of vices such as inefficiency, laziness, absenteeism, wastefulness and corruption. There are many allegations against some civil servants on grand corruption. In 2001, a permanent secretary of the ministry of defense was accused of embezzling funds amounting to N450 million. The chairperson of the Educational Tax Fund (ETF), and the Accountant General of the Federation, the former chairman of the Inland Revenue Services were alleged to have embezzled funds of the ETF to the tune of N40 billion between 1993 and 2000.

However in 2003, Chief Vincent Azie was appointed as Acting Auditor General of the Federation for six months, he audited the annual accounts of government bodies. He reported that most of the accounts audited in 2002 were inaccurate and showed some irregularities in most audited institutions and federal bodies. His report of 2003 showed that there was over-invoicing, non-retirement of cash advances, lack of audit inspection, payment for jobs not done, double-debiting, contract inflation, lack of receipts to back up purchases made, violation of financial regulations, release of money without the approving authorities involvement etc. The report indicted all federal ministries for gross financial indiscipline and lack of regards for laid down financial regulations (Azie 2003 and Anazodo *et al.*, 2012).

For decades civil service has mainly served the interests of bureaucrats and those engaged in the accumulation of public resources for private gain. To this extent, the London Based Economic intelligence unit has rated Nigeria as one of the world's highest risk business locations, behind Iraq and Russia. Some Economists suggests that corruption in Nigeria constitutes up to 10% of the country's GDP. At the grassroots level, officials and administrators ask for gifts of 'Cash' or 'Bread' for conducting even the most basic paperwork. Despite the increasing reported cases of

corruption in the civil service, sanctions are not effectively implemented. As a result, civil servants are not punished for offences such as misappropriation or misuse of public funds.

Based on the afore-mentioned problems in the Nigerian civil service, various reforms have been introduced by different military regimes and civilian administrations to ensure better management, effective service delivery and accountability of public service.

The ultimate goal is to raise the quality of services delivered to the population, support economic and social development, enhance the capacity to carryout core governmental functions like revenue generation, financial management, personnel management, policy formulation etc.

8.0 The Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria

To achieve the aforementioned goal, Nigeria had embarked on many post independence civil service reforms. Among the most important ones are: Adeyinka Morgan Commission (1963), Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Public Service review commission (1974) Dotun Philips Civil Service Reforms (1988), Allison Ayida Commission (1995), and the 1999 Civil Service Reforms till date.

8.1 The Morgan Commission (1963): This was set up to review the wages, salaries and conditions of service of junior federal civil servants and workers in private establishments. It introduced for the first time a minimum wage in the country on a geographical basis. The commission recommended a review of grading of officers and corresponding salary structure to take care of the discrepancies in various parts of the country on uniform salary grade level, conditions of service and uniform remuneration for officers performing the same duty in different parts of the country. It also recommended the award of a minimum living wage although; this was turned down by the government. Some of the commission's recommendations were turned down, and the implementation of the accepted ones did not achieve the intended goal. Thus, the civil service continued to perform poorly.

8.2 Adebo Commission (1971)

This commission was set up to review the existing wages and salaries at all levels in the public services and in the statutory public corporations and state-owned companies; examine areas in which rationalization and harmonization of wages, salaries and other remuneration and conditions of employment are desirable and feasible as between the public and private sectors of the national economy; consider the need to establish a system for ensuring that remunerations in the public services, the statutory corporations and the state-owned companies are periodically reviewed and kept to proper national balance and make recommendations to the Federal Military Government. The commission reviewed the salaries and wages of workers and recommended that a public service commission should be put in place to take up the responsibility of effectively reviewing the salaries and wages (Report of the Salaries and Wages Commission, 1971).

8.3 Udoji Commission (1974)

The Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974 during Gowon's regime, over-hauled the entire public service. The basic reason for setting up the Udoji Commission was to ensure the development and optimum utilization of manpower for efficiency and effectiveness in the service. The review commission was tasked to examine the organization, structure and management of the public service; investigate and evaluate methods of recruitment and conditions of employment; examine all legislation relating to pension, as regarding all post; establish scale of salaries corresponding to each grade as a result of job evaluation, etc. The commission made a number of recommendations that led to the adoption of a "New Style Public Service based on Project Management, Management by Objective (MBO) and Planning Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS)". The Commission opined that the absence of these modern management techniques greatly hindered the ability of the Civil Service workers to achieve desired results. Other recommendations included a unified grading structure to embrace all posts in the civil service, salary to depend on job content and performance, promotion to be based on merit, public sector composition to be in line with that of the private sector, finance and personnel management to be modernized, introduction of code of ethics, motivation of workers, man power development, the term administration to be changed to management etc.

The Udoji Public Service Review Commission attempted to achieve a “New Style Public Service based on result oriented management which would be capable of meeting the challenges of development”. However, institutional and cultural problems combined, to weaken the effectiveness and efficiency of the Civil Service reform and this led to a drastic reduction of the workforce in which about 12,000 public servants lost their jobs in 1975, culminating to low morale of the workers which adversely affected productivity in the service.

8.4 Dotun Philips Commission (1988)

The Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission of 1988 was set up by the Babangida regime. The Commission’s mandate was to study the structure, staffing and operations of the Federal Civil Service and State Bureaucracy.

The highlights of the reform were that, the minister was made both the chief executive and the accounting officer of his ministry. Before this reform, the permanent secretary was the accounting officer of the ministry. The permanent secretary’s appointment was made political as its duration/tenure was left on the pleasure of the president or governor by making their position non- permanent. They were meant to retire with the president or governor. The permanent secretary had a choice whether or not to accept the post. The review commission professionalized the Civil Service, because every officer whether a specialist or generalist made his career entry in the ministry or department of his choice. Each ministry was made to undertake the appointment, discipline and promotions of its staff and the ministries of finance and national planning were merged.

8.5 Allison Ayida Civil Service Reform (1995)

Barely a decade of operation of the 1988 reform, General Sani Abacha came into power and introduced another reform following the opposition raised by top civil servants on the politicization of the post of permanent secretaries. The Abacha regime discovered that the Nigerian civil service was dying gradually due to the effects of the 1988 reforms. The panel was meant to examine and properly define the role of the civil service as an executive arm of

government, examine various provisions of the civil service Decree N0. 43 of 1988 and make recommendations on how to improve performance, efficiency and commitment in the service, make appropriate recommendations on how to raise the morale of the workers, examine the problem of co-ordination and accountability in the ministries and make recommendations, examine the abolition of the office of the head of service etc. After studying the above issues, the Ayida committee recommended that for effective economic management of the civil service, the ministries should be structured according to their objectives, functions and sizes and not on uniform pattern, and that the minister should continue to be the head of the ministry only and the permanent secretary the accounting officer so as to re-introduce checks and balances.

8.6 The Civil Service Reforms (1999 till date)

8.6.1 The Civil Service Reforms during Obasanjo administration (1999-2007): According to Obasanjo (2005), the reform of the civil service is one of the central themes of the government's agenda. "For without a transparent and effective civil service, government business and service delivery to the public will be crippled and mired in dishonesty and graft. I am convinced that an efficient transparent and accountable civil service should be the hallmark of our democratic transformation and development. The Nigeria people deserve nothing less." (Obasanjo, 2005). In his effort to re-orientate the value system and improve the standard of living of Nigerians, Obasanjo regime provided well remunerated packages to enhance democratic governance. Since 1999, the government has increased the salaries of workers twice, while several official hitherto deprived of promotion have been promoted (*The Guardian*, May 30 2004 p. 15). The thrusts of the civil service reforms among others include professionalizing the service with skilled and knowledgeable technocrats with appropriate motivation to assist in up-grading the operations of government; reducing waste and inefficiency by monetizing fringe benefits within an incentive structure that supports private sector development by out-sourcing services which are considered to be unnecessary and only tangential to effective government and operation of the service; improving morale by instituting a more transparently managed contributory pension system that guarantees pension payment as and when due and under direct control of the retiree; rightsizing the workforce of the service by weeding outsourced cadres and those that do not have the qualifications, which required discipline or the proper state of physical and mental health to

serve effectively; instituting fiscal and budgetary reforms within the context of a Medium-Term Public Expenditure framework in order to sanitize budgeting and funding of government programmes (Yayale, 2007 cited in Solomon, 2015 pp. 112-113).

8.6.2 The Civil Service Reform under Yar'Adua: During the Yar',Adua administration, the National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR) was developed by the Brureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR) and the Inter-ministerial Team (IMT) of Public Officials. This strategy has four pillars, namely:

1. Creating an enabling governance and institutional environment
2. An enabling socio-economic environment
3. Public financial management reform
4. Civil service administration reform

The key targets of the strategy are: effective governance of civil service as an institution; organization efficiency and effectiveness; result-oriented human resource management; professional, ethical and accountable work culture; and improved competence of civil servants.

In August, 2009, the federal civil service commission established a new tenure policy limiting the term of permanent secretaries and directors to maximum of eight years in office. As a result, nine permanent secretaries were forced to retire in October, 2009. Some of them were unproductive and ageing, who under the old order would have been in office for almost as long as they liked.

8.6.3 Orosanye Presidential Committee (2011)

President Jonathan inaugurated the Presidential Committee on Rationalisation and Restructuring of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies, on August 18, 2011. This step was taken as an attempt to address the problem of rising budget profile and to reposition the public service for efficiency and effectiveness for the delivery of services that will promote good governance in Nigeria.

The committee was given the following term of reference: to study and review all previous reports on the restructuring of federal government parastatals and advise whether they are still relevant; to examine the enabling acts of all the federal agencies, parastatals, and commissions

and classify them into various sectors; to examine critically, the mandate of the existing federal agencies, parastatals and commissions and determine areas of overlap or duplication of functions and make appropriate recommendations to either restructure, and to advice on any other matter(s) that is incidental to the foregoing which may be relevant to desire of government to prune the cost of governance (*Tell Magazine*, April 30, 2012).

At the end of its assignment, the committee recommended the abolition of 38 agencies, merger of 52 and reversion of 14 agencies to departments in the relevant ministries. The committee also recommended the conduct of management audit for 89 agencies to capture the biometric features of staff as well as the discontinuation of government funding of professional bodies/councils. A breakdown of what would be saved from the exercise gave N124.8bn from agencies proposed for abolition; N100.6bn from agencies proposed for mergers; N6.6bn from professional bodies; N489.9bn from universities; N50.9bn from polytechnics; N32.3bn from colleges of education and N616m from boards of federal medical centres.

In summary, the committee recommended the scrapping of 102 statutory agencies from the current 263, abolition of 38 agencies, merger of 52 and reversion of 14 to departments in the ministries. The 800-page report also recommended the discontinuation of government funding of professional bodies and councils. Former President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Olisa Agbakoba said that:

“Even without the report, many people know that there are too many government agencies, too many government officials and it is not sustainable that we spend 85 percent of our revenue on less than 500,000 Nigerians to the exclusion of 170 million Nigerians. We are spending too much money on the civil service. That is what the Oronsaye report established. So, if we want a new and efficient government where things are done appropriately, without the Oronsaye report, we definitely have to do something about it.” ([News Editor](#), Apr .19, 2015).

However, till the end of Jonathan’s administration nothing was done to cut down the waste that the over 420 ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) have become. Though, the current

administration under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari promised to run a very lean government, which would involve rationalising overlapping and redundant ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in line with the Steve Oronsaye presidential committee report, Nigerians are still waiting to see this.

9.0 The Impacts of these Reforms on Effective Service Delivery

The Nigerian Civil Service has undergone several organizational and structural reforms, both before and after independence as we have x-rayed above, yet there is no remarkable improvement in the quality of service provided to the citizenry. Corruption still rears its ugly head again after many years of military exit in governance. There is weak national consciousness due to earlier introduction of the Nigerianization and regionalization policies that encouraged ethnicity and sectionalism in the rank and file of staffers in the service. There is multiplicity of classes and grades which brought about over bloating of the number of civil servants resulting to high re-current expenditure to the peril of infrastructural development. There is still a uniform centralized control of the civil service as was put in place by the colonial masters. It is obvious that a result oriented civil service had not emerged in Nigeria. The quality of the civil service was severely hampered by cultural, structural, institutional and other management defects.

Therefore, despite the various reforms being carried out on Nigerian civil service, the institution could not still performs its expected responsibilities effectively and efficiently as a result of the following challenges:

- ✚ Lack of Political Will by the government
- ✚ Lack of Adequate Salary
- ✚ Corruption
- ✚ Politicization of the Civil Service
- ✚ Over Bloated Bureaucracy
- ✚ Weakness of the Civil Service
- ✚ Lack of Requisite Tools and Equipment for their work
- ✚ Frequent Postings and Reshufflings of Top Administrators among others.

10.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has established that the civil service is a key machinery in the implementation of government policies towards accomplishing overall national development goals. Perhaps, this informs the government to embark on series of reforms of the service. However, as revealed by this paper, the intentions of the various reforms have failed to reposition the service for effective service delivery in the country. Today, the Nigerian state and people are still faced with the problem of development.

There is therefore the need to embark on realistic, workable and practical reforms that have human face rather than the usual cosmetic approaches. First of all there is need for the government to create enabling conditions of service. This has to do with ensuring adequate pay package and other economic incentives. If this is duly and religiously implemented, civil servants will be discouraged from using unethical means in getting economic benefits from clients and the public in general. In fact, the current national minimum wage of N18,000.00 , should be reviewed upward.

Another realistic approach in the reform process should focus on the restructuring of the public service sector to avoid unnecessary duplication of ministries, departments and agencies of government. This would definitely prevent waste of resources in the system.

Finally, there is also the need to promote sound policies on recruitment, training and retraining of civil servants for effective service delivery. These polices will contribute immensely to enhancing and promoting professionalism, and ethical values of honesty, integrity, confidentiality, political neutrality, accountability, discipline and transparency in the conduct of government business. Recruitment and promotion or advancement on the job should be strictly based on meritocracy, performance and achievement.

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